

Message Text

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C O N F I D E N T I A L PARIS 21157

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, FR, UR, PO

SUBJECT: BREZHNEV VISIT TO FRANCE PROBABLE BEFORE END
OF 1974

1. SUMMARY. ACCORDING TO QUAI DEPUTY DIRECTOR FOR
EAST EUROPE OMNES, BREZHNEV VISIT TO FRANCE BEFORE END
OF YEAR IS "PROBABLE." HOWEVER, RECENT STORIES IN
FRENCH PRESS INDICATING VISIT AGREED TO ARE SPECULATIVE
AND PREMATURE. END SUMMARY.

2. OMNES SAID THERE IS A GOOD CHANCE THAT BREZHNEV WILL
VISIT FRANCE BEFORE THE END OF 1974. REGULAR FRENCH
SOVIET SUMMIT CONTACTS ONCE OR TWICE A YEAR HAVE BECOME
A FACT OF LIFE (MINSK AND RAMBOUILLET IN 1973, PITSUNDA
IN MARCH 1974), AND PRESIDENT GISCARD D'ESTAING SEEMS
INCLINED TO CONTINUE THIS PATTERN. VISIT WOULD BE AN
INFORMAL WORKING ARRANGEMENT WITH MINIMUM OF PROTOCOL
ON THE ORDER OF POMPIDOU'S MARCH TRIP TO PITSUNDA.
OMNES CAUTIONED, HOWEVER, THAT VISIT HAS NOT YET BEEN
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OFFICIALLY AGREED TO, AND THAT FRENCH HAVE NOT YET

DISCUSSED POSSIBLE DATES AND MODALITIES WITH SOVIETS.
FRENCH AMBASSADOR TO USSR VIMONT WILL RETURN TO PARIS
FOR CONSULTATIONS LATER IN SEPTEMBER, AND WHILE HERE
IS EXPECTED TO MEET WITH GISCARD, WITH BREZHNEV VISIT
A MAJOR SUBJECT ON AGENDA.

3. OMNES GAVE IMPRESSION THAT BREZHNEV VISIT, ASSUMING
IT TAKES PLACE, WILL BE ROUTINE ALTHOUGH HE EXPECTS
FRENCH PRESS WILL PLAY IT UP AS SIGNALLING A WARMING
TREND IN FRENCH-SOVIET RELATIONS.

4. COMMENTING ON CURRENT OFFICIAL VISIT OF MINISTER OF
STATE PONIATOWSKI TO POLAND, OMNES SAID PONIATOWSKI HAS
DUAL MISSION: (1) TO LAY GROUNDWORK FOR GISCARD VISIT
TO POLAND, WHICH MIGHT TAKE PLACE AROUND MID-1975, AND
(2) TO EXPLORE POSSIBILITY OF EXPANDING FRENCH-POLISH
ECONOMIC COOPERATION. HE SAID IT IS LIKELY THAT FRENCH
FOREIGN MINISTER SAUVAGNARGUES WILL ALSO VISIT POLAND
LATER THIS YEAR.

5. NATIONAL ASSEMBLY PRESIDENT EDGAR FAURE'S PRESS
SECRETARY HAS ALSO TOLD US THAT PRESIDUM CHAIRMAN
PODGORNY, ACCOMPANIED BY CHAIRMAN OF COUNCIL OF
NATIONALITIES, WILL VISIT PARIS IN LATE OCTOBER ON
OCCASION OF 50TH ANNIVERSARY OF ESTABLISHMENT OF
FRENCH-SOVIET DIPLOMATIC RELATIONS. ACCORDING TO
SOURCE, SOVIETS PRESSED FRENCH HARD TO GET THEM TO
AGREE TO PODGORNY'S VISIT.
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